

# PARTNERING FOR HOUSING

2024 Grants

2024 Housing Strategy  
Interim Progress Report

December 10, 2025



**THE ENDOWMENT**  
NEW HANOVER COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT

# ABOUT THE ENDOWMENT

The Endowment's mission is to improve the health, education, safety, and economic opportunity of every person in New Hanover County. The Endowment was established from the sale of the county-owned New Hanover Regional Medical Center to Novant Health in 2020. The initial fund has grown from nearly \$1.3 billion to more than \$1.7 billion, allowing The Endowment to award millions in grants to our community every year, in perpetuity.



Education



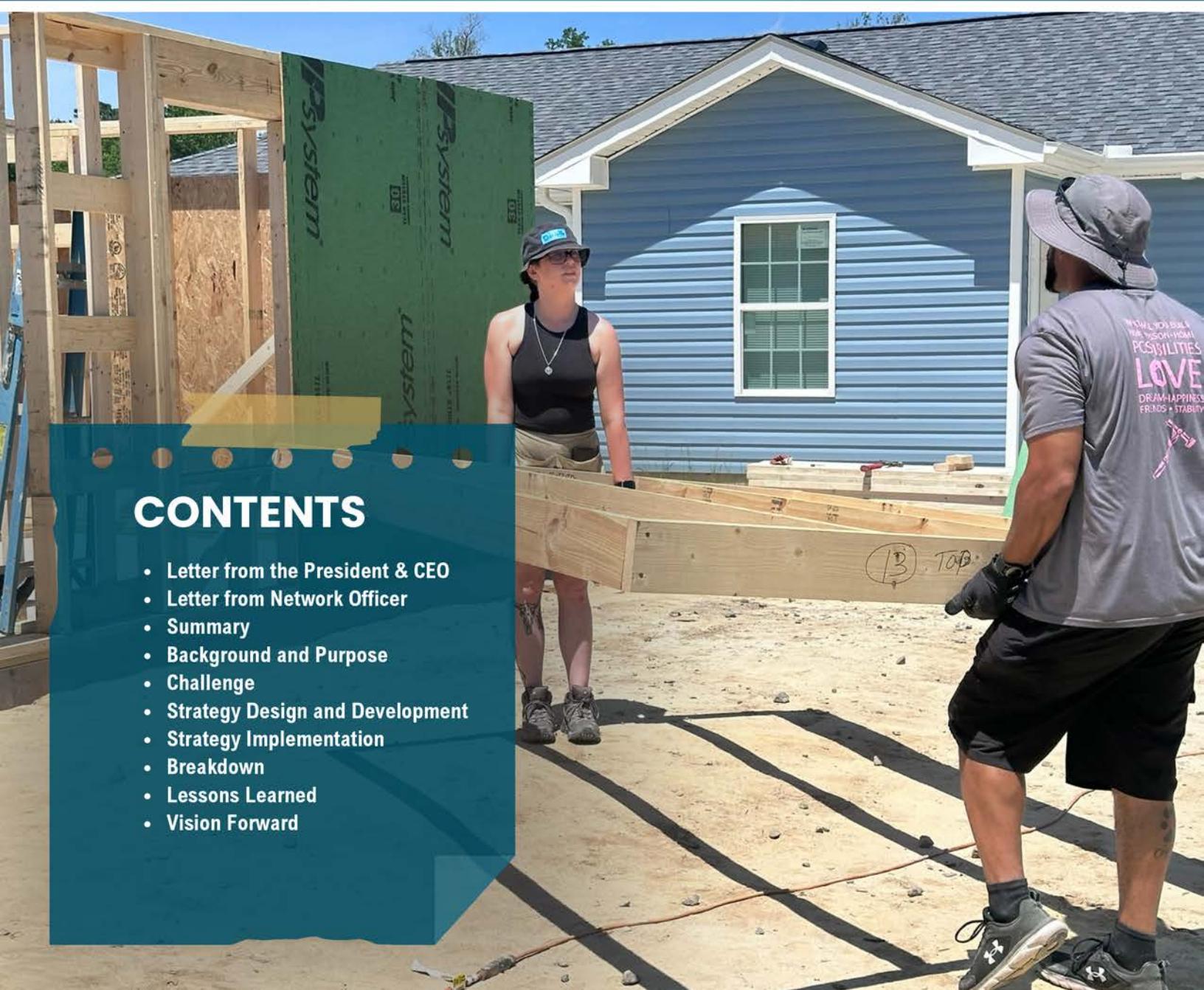
Social and Health Equity



Community Safety



Community Development



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# Letter from the PRESIDENT AND CEO

Dear New Hanover County Community,

As we approach the holidays, we are reminded of something that touches us all: the need for a place to call home. Housing is the foundation that allows families to thrive educationally, economically, and in health. It is no surprise, then, that in our strategic refresh process earlier this year, the Endowment's Board identified housing as a cross-cutting strategy spanning our four pillars of social and health equity, education, community safety, and community development.

This report focuses on the 2024 housing strategy we developed in consultation with cross-sector partners who shared their insights and helped us understand the challenge in New Hanover County and design an approach grounded in real community needs. In the pages ahead, you'll find an overview of the grants we made in 2024. While there is more work ahead, these pages demonstrate what becomes possible when a community comes together around the shared goal of ensuring everyone has a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

Promoting housing affordability requires not just increasing supply but also expanding economic opportunity. Affordability improves when families have access to wages that keep pace with the cost of living, and the housing cost burden decreases with gainful employment.

These concepts were central to our strategic refresh and will continue to guide our work as we look forward to investing in strategies that advance economic opportunity as a key component of housing affordability.

Thank you for all you do to help build a future where every family has a safe, stable, and affordable home.



With gratitude,  
**Sophie Dagenais,**  
*Interim President and CEO*

## Partnering for Housing?

Dear friends and partners,

The initiatives and outcomes in this report reflect New Hanover County's housing needs and the resolve among local partners to address them. As The Endowment's Community Development Network Officer, my role is to support strategic collaboration, steward resources, and advance programs that increase housing stability and opportunity.

We celebrate the achievements made possible through collective vision and partnerships. These investments have strengthened families, revitalized neighborhoods, and opened new possibilities for all who call our county home.

We will continue to ground our work in strong evidence and the perspectives of local residents, ensuring that our approach reflects community priorities and advances data-driven solutions. With each investment and partnership, we move closer to a future in which safe, stable housing is not only expected, but achievable for every resident.



**Terri Burhans,**  
*Community Development Network Officer*

# SUMMARY

This report highlights the need for affordable and stable housing, with thousands of households facing housing cost burdens and a significant affordability gap in New Hanover County's housing stock.

To help address some of these needs The Endowment launched a strategy in 2024, focused on both preservation and development—funding urgent repairs, stabilizing vulnerable households, supporting new construction, and aligning efforts with county and city plans.

Overall, Endowment grants contributed to urgently needed housing, strengthened local service capacity, and reinforced a vision of resilience and opportunity for all New Hanover County residents.



## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

### Key Goals



**Identify the reach, outcomes, and focus of stabilization and production grants.**



**Assess alignment with city and county housing priorities.**



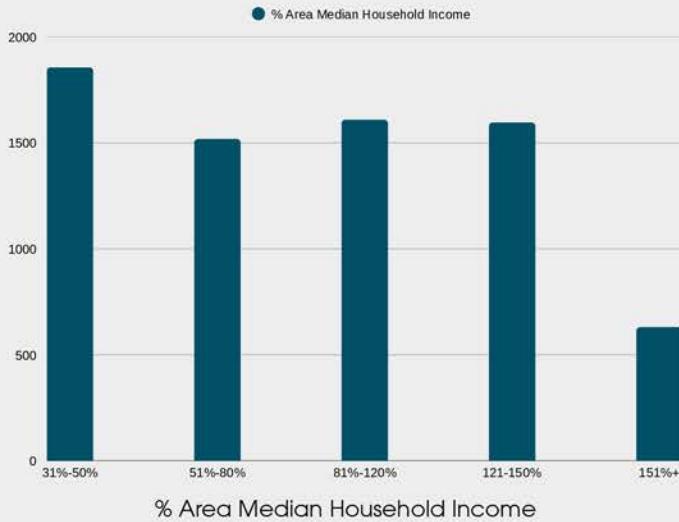
**Provide transparency and identify future strategic opportunities, including consideration of emerging tools for impact investing.**

### Data and Methods

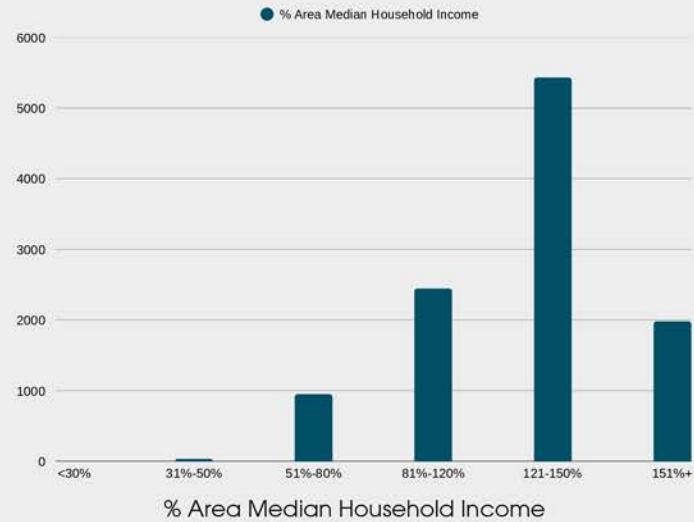
- The report analyzes data and narratives submitted by grantees, supplemented by partner meetings, site visits, and local research.
- Grant activities were reviewed by type (stabilization vs. production), population served, and alignment with strategic goals.

# The Challenge IN NEW HANOVER COUNTY

NHC Rental Housing Gaps by Area Median Household Income (2024-2029)



NHC For-Sale Housing Gaps by Area Median Household Income (2024-2029)



Source: Bowen National Research, Housing Supply Gap Analysis, State of North Carolina

- In 2024, over a third of New Hanover County households are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of income on housing—the eighth highest rate in North Carolina.
- Research shows there is an affordability shortage of at least 7,377 rental units for households earning less than 50% of area median income, with the most acute shortage for those earning less than 30%.
- Home prices have risen 66% in recent years, and the share of homes affordable to the median income dropped from 50% in 2020 to just 5% in 2023.
- Rent is unaffordable for over half the county's renters, compounding instability and risk of eviction or homelessness.
- The rise in housing costs has outpaced wage growth, pushing many workers to live outside the county and commute or face severe cost burdens locally.
- These pressures strain families, contribute to higher rates of instability, and increase costs for health, education, and local services, underscoring the need for coordinated, large-scale solutions



Source: Bowen National Research, Housing Supply Gap Analysis, State of North Carolina

# 2024 Strategy DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The Endowment's 2024 housing strategy was designed through collaborative engagement with local partners, data-driven analysis, and alignment with public sector objectives.

## Key elements of the strategy include:

- Core operating and capital grants for organizations providing direct housing assistance, emergency repairs, and legal/rental support.
- Funding for new rental and shelter developments, urgent repairs, and land or project acquisition, with a strong focus on projects serving households below area median income.
- Partner convening, expert consultation, and public input to inform flexible, evidence-based investments.
- Exploration of impact investing as a future path to scale resources and accelerate progress, beyond traditional grantmaking.

The Endowment's 2024 housing strategy was designed to complement the priorities of New Hanover County and the City of Wilmington. Our funding focused on key outcomes—including expanding the supply of affordable homes, preserving units at risk of loss, and improving housing stability for low- and moderate-income residents—ensuring alignment with our policy makers and long-term community goals.

## The Endowment Housing Strategy

### Affordable Housing & Services Stabilization

- Preserve and maintain existing affordable housing to ensure long-term sustainability and promote access to housing
  - Minimize resident displacement
- Operating grants (programs and services, incl. capacity building, legal, rental and financial assistance)

### Affordable Housing Production

- Provide resources to rehab/repair existing units and build new units
- Capital grants (rehabilitation and repairs, land acquisition, pre-development, site development, and new construction)



## Housing Strategy Development Partners

- A Safe Place
- Cape Fear Realtors Foundation
- Cape Fear Collective
- Cape Fear Community Land Trust
- Cape Fear Habitat for Humanity Cape Fear Realtors Foundation
- Domestic Violence Shelter and Services
- Eden Village
- Family Promise Promise of the Lower Cape Fear
- Financial Protection Law Center
- First Fruit Ministries
- Good Shepherd Center
- LevelUp Strategies
- LINC
- New Hope CDC
- The Salvation Army Cape Fear
- WARM NC
- Waterway
- Wilmington Housing Authority
- Wilmington Realtors Foundation
- Workforce Housing Advisory Committee
- City and County Staff
- Cape Fear Affordable Housing Coalition

# STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Endowment provided both operating and capital grants to stabilize existing affordable housing, support urgent repairs, and fund new shelter, rental, and homeownership opportunities, with a strong priority on projects serving low- and moderate-income households.

## 2024 Stabilization Grants

# of Grants  14

\$ Awarded  \$7,634,619

Term  12-months; Multi-Year

Residents Served  8,790\*

Leverage  \$22,373,189 in Year 1

## 2024 Production Grants

# of Grants  10

\$ Awarded  \$16,209,447

Term  12-months

# of Units  179 (repairs/rehab); 316 (new); 89 beds (transitional)

Leverage  \$85,265,051 in Year 1

\*Grantees self reported total numbers served.

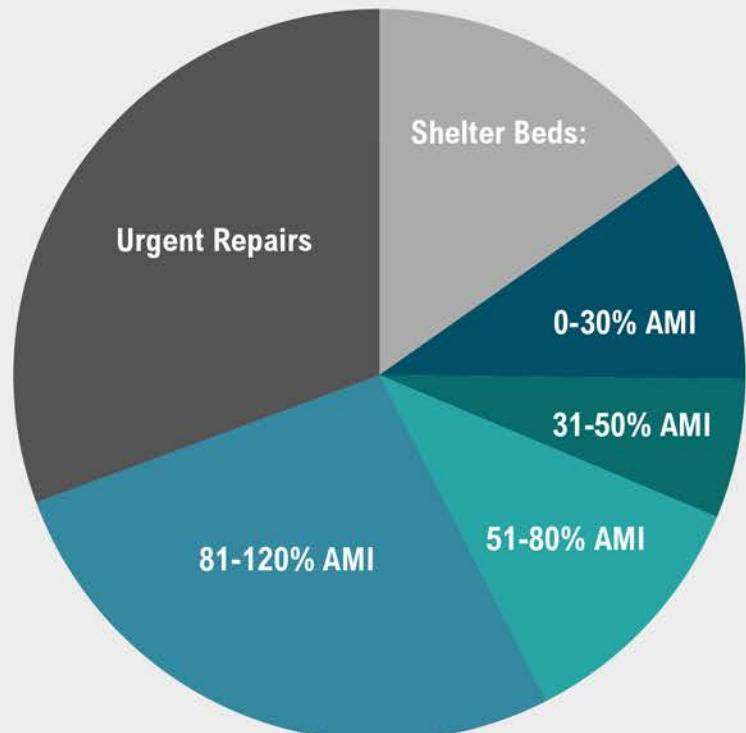
## 2024 Production Grants – Affordability Mix

**Total Awards**  
\$16,209,447

**Leveraged**  
\$85,265,051

**% of total project budgets** 39%

- Shelter Beds
- 0-30% AMI
- 31-50% AMI
- 51-80% AMI
- 81-120% AMI
- Urgent repairs



2024

# Housing Strategy Grants: Break Down

## Strategy Implementation: 2024 Stabilization Grants

| Grantee Name                            | Housing Type             | Use                           | Grant Amount           |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Backyard Housing Group                  | Accessory Dwelling Units | Core Operating                | \$ 180,000.00          |
| Cape Fear Collective                    | Rental Housing           | Core Operating                | \$ 900,000.00          |
| Cape Fear Community Land Trust          | Rental Housing           | Core Operating/Rental Subsidy | \$ 200,000.00          |
| Coastal Horizons Center                 | Shelter/Transitional     | Core Operating                | \$ 600,000.00          |
| Domestic Violence Shelter and Services, | Shelter/Transitional     | Core Operating                | \$ 594,619.00          |
| Eden Village                            | Shelter/Transitional     | Core Operating                | \$ 300,000.00          |
| Financial Protection Law Center         | Other                    | Legal Services                | \$ 300,000.00          |
| First Fruit Ministries                  | Shelter/Transitional     | Core Operating                | \$ 600,000.00          |
| Good Shepherd Center                    | Shelter/Transitional     | Core Operating/Rehousing      | \$ 1,665,000.00        |
| Leading Into New Communities, Inc (LIN) | Shelter/Transitional     | Assistance                    | \$ 600,000.00          |
| New H.O.P.E. CDC                        | Rental Housing           | Core Operating                | \$ 600,000.00          |
| One Christian Network                   | Other                    | Core Operating                | \$ 225,000.00          |
| WARM NC                                 | Urgent Repairs           | Core Operating                | \$ 600,000.00          |
| Wilmington REALTORS Foundation          | Homeownership            | Core Operating                | \$ 270,000.00          |
| <b>Total</b>                            |                          |                               | <b>\$ 7,634,619.00</b> |

\*All grant terms are 3 years except Cape Fear Community Land Trust (2 years)

## Strategy Implementation: 2024 Production Grants

| Cost per bed: \$24,933        | Housing Type         | Shelter / Transitional       |            |            |              | Use  | Amount      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|--|-------------|
| A Safe Place                  | Shelter/Transitional | 14                           |            |            |              | Construction, loan repayment, infrastructure | \$1,200,000 |
|                               |                      |                              |            |            |              |  |             |
| The Salvation Army of Cape F  | Shelter/Transitional | 75                           |            |            |              | Construction                                 | \$1,000,000 |
| Total                         |                      | 89                           |            |            |              |  |             |
|                               |                      | # of Units supported by NHCE |            |            |              |  |             |
|                               |                      | 0-30% AMI                    | 31-50% AMI | 51-80% AMI | 80%-120% AMI | Total  |             |
| Cost per unit: \$39,650       |                      | 6                            | 6          |            |              |  |             |
| Cape Fear Collective          | Rental housing       |                              |            |            |              | Renovation                                   | \$837,000   |
| Cape Fear Habitat for Humanit | Homeownership        |                              |            |            |              | Construction, Infrastructure, acquisitions   | \$3,500,000 |
| New H.O.P.E. CDC              | Rental housing       | 12                           |            |            |              | Acquisition, renovation                      | \$2,460,000 |
| Shelter America Group         | Rental housing       | 30                           | 36         | 65         | 53           | Acquisition, construction                    | \$4,700,000 |
| Wesley CDC                    | Permanent supportive | 16                           |            |            |              | Predevelopment                               | \$382,447   |
| Wilmington REALTORS Found     | Homeownership        |                              |            |            |              | Predevelopment and loan repayment            | \$650,000   |
| Total                         |                      | 58                           | 36         | 65         | 157          | 316  |             |
| Urgent repairs                |                      |                              |            |            |              |  |             |
| Cost per unit: \$8,268        |                      | 100                          |            |            |              |  |             |
| WARM NC                       | Urgent repairs       |                              |            |            |              | Urgent repairs                               | \$1,300,000 |
| Hadden hall                   | Urgent repairs       |                              |            |            |              | Urgent repairs                               | \$180,000   |
| Total                         |                      | 179                          |            |            |              |  |             |

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Flexible funding for both stabilization and new production allowed organizations to respond quickly to urgent repairs, displacement, and operational challenges.
- Alignment with public sector plans and ongoing community engagement ensured resources targeted the highest needs and leveraged government, private, and nonprofit capacity.
- Capacity constraints, rising costs, and the complexity of housing partnerships demanded adaptability—successful grantees demonstrated resilience, partnership, and willingness to revise plans as needed.
- The process reinforced the need for improved and consistent grantee reporting, better peer learning, and new tools like impact investing to amplify impact and address root causes for the long term.



## AMMENDMENTS TO A BROADER VISION

As a cross-cutting strategy, housing undergirds our four pillars of social and health equity, education, community safety, and community development.

**Social and health equity:** Stable, affordable housing is deeply connected to health. Families living in unstable or substandard housing face higher risks for chronic illness, mental health challenges, and barriers to accessing care. By advancing housing stability, we help reduce these disparities and promote healthier communities.

**Education:** Housing stability supports educational success. Children who move less frequently and live in quality homes experience better school attendance, higher academic achievement, and stronger overall development. Affordable, reliable housing gives families the foundation to support children's learning and growth.

**Community Safety:** Safe, affordable housing strengthens neighborhoods by reducing overcrowding, fostering stability, and building stronger connections among residents. These conditions promote safer, more resilient communities.

**Community Development:** Housing affordability drives economic opportunity and neighborhood vitality, and the reverse is true: people cannot afford housing without access to wages that keep pace with the cost of living. We can promote affordability not only by supporting housing that is affordable across income levels, but also by expanding economic opportunity, helping families build sustainable income, and creating clear pathways to financial stability.



**THE ENDOWMENT**  
NEW HANOVER COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT

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